

5-29-1945

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## With the Colors

May 29, 1945

Peninsular Base Headquarters in Italy. — First Lieutenant Bessie B. Wilson of Newton is now serving with the Seventieth General hospital of the Peninsular Base section. The unit was the nearest general hospital to the Fifth army front lines. It has had almost two years of overseas service.

Sponsored by St. Louis university of St. Louis, Missouri, the medical and dental officers, with the exception of a few replacements, are members of the faculties of the medical and dental schools of this university, and the nurses were obtained from the various hospitals in St. Louis and vicinity. The enlisted personnel represent all sections of the United States. The unit was organized by Colonel Curtis H. Lohr, MC, who is its executive officer.

The Seventieth General hospital was activated at the O'Reilly General hospital, Springfield, Missouri, on September 1, 1942. In December of the same year the unit was transferred for intensive training to the Harmon General hospital at Longview, Texas, and went overseas to North Africa in September, 1943.

It operated as a general hospital in the Mediterranean Base Hospital Center until November, 1944. In addition to its routine professional activities, this hospital was assigned the task of organizing, equipping and training of all Italian Station hospitals, sanitary companies and medical detachments in the district. Being the last general hospital to leave North Africa, this unit gradually absorbed all the work of the various medical installations which was a formidable task.

Lieutenant Wilson, a daughter of Newton A. Wilson of Newton, was commissioned in the Army Nurse Corps, and has been overseas since August, 1943. Before entering the military service she was a public health nurse for the Missouri State Health Department. She was graduated from the St. Louis City Hospital Training School for Nurses in 1926, and from the Newton high school.

\* \* \* \* \*

On Board a United States Battleship in the Pacific.—Yeoman Second Class Donovan C. Bower of Newton, Illinois, didn't know when he read at Great Lakes Naval Training Center of the bombardments in the Aleutians, that the next time this ship went into action he would be aboard.

"It was no time at all after I read about the Aleutians campaign that I was carrying my gear up the gangplank of this ship," he said recently. "I'd never even seen a ship before and I was sadly misinformed," he added.

In the year and a half he has been aboard, Bower has seen action all the way from the Gilberts to the Philippines, taking in the Marshall and Marianas campaigns on the way. During the Marshalls operations, Bower and his shipmates stayed on their battle stations for eighteen hours without relief. Coffee and sandwiches were brought up to them from the galley.

Bower does much of his work and also sleeps and eats in the executive office aboard this ship where he handles discharges and enlistments. Eight hours a day he stands a decoding watch and at general quarters he mans battle phones, relaying information on plane positions to the damage control office.

His wife, the former Mary K. Hancock, lives at 627 College street, Newton, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence L. Bower, at 431 East Morgan street, Newton. Bower, who is 25, has a younger brother, Bobby, serving with the Army in Iran.

A furniture salesman before enlisting, he plans to start a furniture business in partnership with his brother after the war.

\* \* \* \* \*

Corporal Charles Franklin Hall of Newton, an operations clerk at a B-24 Liberator heavy bomber base in England, was among the men honored at a special review commemorating the service of those who, through faithful performance of their duties, had supported the combat fliers of the 445th Bombardment group in the course of 280 bombing missions during seventeen months in England.

According to Colonel William W. Jones, station commander, "No one realizes better than those who fly in combat the essential roll played by the men who back them up by work on the ground. Upon the performance of these soldiers, whose tasks are often tedious and seemingly remote from combat operations, has de-



pended the welfare and safety of every combat crew and the successful completion of every bombing attack. They deserve great credit."

The 445th bombardment group has been cited by Major General William E. Kepner, commanding general, Second Air Division, for "Distinguished and outstanding performance of duty in combat" during a career that has included high - altitude bombing attacks on key industries, airfields, and transportation centers throughout Europe, on rocket-launching sites in France, and in tactical targets and troop concentrations in coordination with Allied ground operations from the first landings in Normandy on D-day through the Ardennes campaign and the Rhine crossings.

Corporal Hall is a son of Ralph E. Hall of Route Two, Newton. He was employed by the Norris Electric at Newton before entering the Army in 1943, and has served in England since February, 1944.

\* \* \* \* \*

With an iron fist in a velvet glove the Military Police guard the five gates at Fort Sheridan. These soldiers, chosen especially to fill the difficult dual role of ambassadors of good will and protectors of a military installation, stand guard twenty-four hours each day, according to Colonel George H. Cushman, post commander.

They are charged not only with the important mission of protecting both personnel and property at Fort Sheridan, but also are required to greet every person, civilian or military, who seeks entrance and to pass upon the credentials presented. Among military police here is Staff Sergeant Freeman F. Cunefare, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. O. Cunefare of Gila vicinity.

In immaculate uniforms and with impeccable military manners members of Fort Sheridan's Military Police Company are trained to detect any person attempting illegal entrance to, or departure from the post. To fulfill his mission as a Military Policeman must be accomplished in arms, being adept in the care and use of the pistol and submachine gun.

Military Police at any one of the five gates must combine the talents of Mister Anthony and the experts on Information Please, for they are presented with problems to tax the most resourceful. Weary wives and mothers, perplexed sweethearts, and worried fathers appear at the gates to be guided to their loved ones. Innumerable curious or meddlesome must be carefully weeded out and courteously but firmly turned away.

The roster of the Military Police company at Fort Sheridan reveals the names of many who have completed overseas combat duty. Battle stars, Purple Hearts and Distinguished Service ribbons are commonplace with these men. Though not as famous as their brethren in Europe who were dubbed "Snowdrops" by General Eisenhower as a compliment to their white helmets, gloves and leggings, Fort Sheridan's military police fulfill the same functions, being equally proud of their title "good soldiers."

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Mrs. Earl Swick of near Newton has received word from her son, Private First Class Donald R. Swick, that he arrived in New York on May 11 and has been sent to a hospital in Springfield, Missouri. He said he was feeling fairly good now.

He was wounded in Germany on April 3, receiving a seven inch wound one inch above his right ear. His left side was paralyzed until he underwent an operation. He said he would have to be operated on again to have a silver plate placed in his head.

He is expecting a furlough some time in June, and will be discharged from the service in the near future.

\* \* \* \* \*

With the Thirty-third Division on Luzon.—Private First Class Joseph L. Schackmann of Newton vicinity has been awarded the Combat Infantryman's badge for exemplary performance of duty in action against the enemy in Northern Luzon.

Private First Class Schackmann, who entered the army in 1942 has served in the Central Pacific, New Guinea and since February has been participating in the Philippines Liberation campaign.

He is with the 123rd Infantry regiment and took part in the capture of Baguio, summer capital of the Philippines.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dorris McDowell, who has been in the Southwest Pacific for over two years, is back in the United States and is expected home on leave soon.

Guner's Mate First Class John A. Connor writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. O. Connor of Newton, that this ship has been in the fighting about the Philippines and Okinawa and other Western Pacific bases.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lenvil John Curtis, 20, of Newton has advanced to ship's cook, first class, after serving with a Seabee unit in Iceland for twenty months. He wears the European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre ribbon.

Curtis' parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Curtis, live at 627 Water street, Newton. He was employed by the Illinois Central railroad.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sergeant Robert D. Foust, son of Alva Oliver Foust of Rose Hill, has been assigned to Pope field, North Carolina, a base of the First Troop Carrier Command, and has reported for duty with the Fifth Provisional TC squadron. His wife, the former Fern Louise Royce, resides at Linton, Indiana.

\* \* \* \* \*

Leroy D. Shaner, seaman second class, writing from the Philippines to his mother, Mrs. Gola Sempstrott, added: "There were really a lot of happy fellows when we received word that the war was over in Germany. I took a few pictures on the beach but they didn't turn out so good."

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Floyd Wayne Earnest, 18, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wayne Earnest of Route Five, Newton, is receiving his initial Naval indoctrination at the Naval Training Center at Great Lakes. When his recruit training is completed, the seaman will receive a period of leave.